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Message Text

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47
ACTION AF-01

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TO USINFO WASHDC
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 6996

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FOR: IBS COVERAGE DESK, AFRICAN DIVISION
IAA & IPS AF BRANCH

SUBJECT: MADAGASCAR UNDER MILITARY DIRECTORATE RULE

1. NOTE EDITORS. THIS REPORT WRITTEN FRIDAY MARCH 7 WILL HOPEFULLY REACH YOU ON TIME FOR BROADCAST MARCH 11 OR 12, SHOULD YOU SO DESIRE.

2. MARCH 11 WILL MARK THE TRAGIC ANNIVERSARY OF COLONEL RICHARD RATSIMANDRAVA'S ASSASSINATION IN UPTOWN (DANS LA HAUTE VILLE) TANANARIVE ON TUESDAY FEBRUARY 11 AT 8 O'CLOCK IN THE EVENING BY MEMBERS OF THE FRS (FORCES REPUBLICAINES DE SECURITE).

3. THE ASSASSINATION, IT WILL BE REMEMBERED, WAS FOLLOWED BY A FEW TENSE DAYS IN THE MALAGASY CAPITAL.

4. FIGHTING BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT FORCES AND THE FRS WAS CONCENTRATED AT THE FRS CAMP AT ANTANIMORA (PRONOUNCE: ANTANAMOOR). SHOOTING ALSO TOOK PLACE IN DOWNTOWN (CENTRE) TANANARIVE WHERE A GROUP OF FRS HAD APPARENTLY TAKEN REFUGE IN THE BUILDING OF THE MALAGASY SOCIALIST PARTY (PSM). THE CASUALTIES WERE: 5 DEAD AMONG THE MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES (INCLUDING COLONEL RATSIMANDRAVA AND TWO OF HIS BODY GUARDS) AND 16 FRS (INCLUDING COLONEL RATSIMANDRAVA'S TWO ASSASSINS). THREE CIVILIANS WERE KILLED BY "LOST BULLETS" (BALLES PERDUES).
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5. FIGHTING CAME TO AN END ON FRIDAY AFTERNOON FEB-
RUARY 14. THAT SAME EVENING THE MALAGASY TELEVISION
BROADCAST A (QUITE REMARKABLE) 30-MINUTE FILMED
REPORTAGE ON THE MILITARY ACTIONS THAT LED TO THE
SURRENDER OF THE FRS AT ANTANIMORA, AND THE SUBSEQUENT
OCCUPATION OF THE CAMP BY THE GOVERNMENT FORCES.

6. SINCE FEBRUARY 14, TANANARIVE HAS BEEN CALM AND NO
DISTURBANCES OF ANY KIND HAVE BEEN REPORTED FROM THE PRO-
VINCES. HOWEVER, SINCE THE VERY EVENING OF COLONEL
RATSIMANDRAVA'S ASSASSINATION MARTIAL LAW AND CURFEW
REGULATIONS HAVE BEEN IN EFFECT IN THE ENTIRE COUNTRY.
IN TANANARIVE THE CURFEW IS STILL BETWEEN 19:30 AND 05:00
HOURS BUT IN THE PROVINCES IT HAS BEEN SHORTENED. IN
TULEAR AND MAJUNGA, FOR INSTANCE, THE CUREFEW STARTS ONLY
AT 21:00 HOURS. IN TAMATAVE IT LASTS FROM 22:00 HOURS
TO 04:00 HOURS AND IN DIEGO-SUAREZ FROM 23:00 HOURS TO
04:00 HOURS.

7. COLONEL RATSIMANDRAVA'S IMPRESSIVE FUNERAL TOOK PLACE
ON FEBRUARY 17. LARGE CROWDS ATTENDED THE OECUMENICAL
RELIGIOUS SERVICE AT THE LA CATALANE MILITARY CAMP
WHICH WAS CONSECRATED AS CAMP RICHARD RATSIMANDRAVA
DURING THE SAME CEREMONY. THE EULOGY WAS GIVEN BY
GENERAL GILLES ANDRIAMAHAZO, HEAD OF THE MILITARY
DIRECTORATE WHICH TOOK THE REINS OF GOVERNMENT ON
ITS HANDS ON THE EVENING OF THE RATSIMANDRAVA
ASSASSINATION.

8. THE DIRECTORATE IS COMPOSED OF 18 ARMY, NAVY,
AIR FORCE AND GENDARMERIE OFFICERS REPRESENTING ALL
OF MADAGASCAR'S SIX PROVINCES.

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